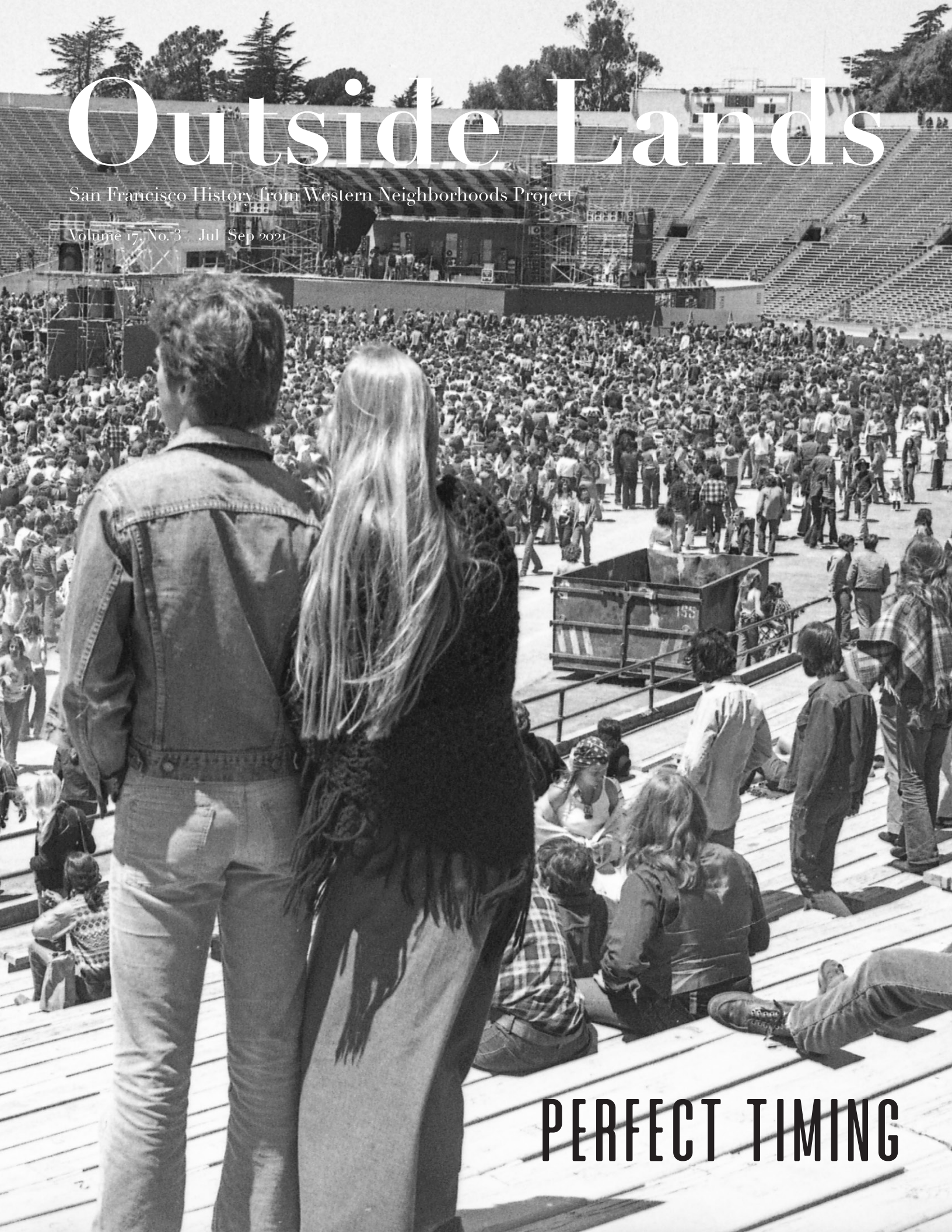
Outside Lands

San Francisco History from Western Neighborhoods Project

Volume 17, No. 3 · Jul–Sep 2021



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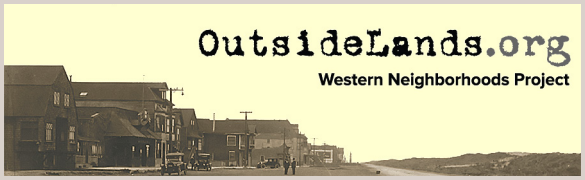

Outside Lands

History from Western Neighborhoods Project
(Previously issued as SF West History)

Jul-Sep 2021: Volume 17, Number 3

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Cover: Kezar Stadium, May 26, 1973. (Photo by Greg Gaar; courtesy of Greg Gaar / wnp73.0558)

Right: Sea Cliff, 2014. (Photo by Chrissy Huhn; courtesy of Chrissy Huhn)

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Inside

1 Director's Message

2 Where in West S.F.?
by Paul Judge

4 Chrissy Huhn Remembers
by Chrissy Huhn

8 Sutro Baths Swimsuits: An Incomplete History
by John Martini

14 Playlist: Local Music According to Greg Gaar
by Greg Gaar

20 Inside the Outside Lands

22 The Last Word





DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

It's summer in the city again, which means our friendly fog enfolds much of the west side and I get particularly nostalgic. We normally think of spring as a time of renewal, but that's how I feel about the summer. We have light longer and everything feels available, open with opportunity. Never has that been more true than this year, as we tentatively rebound from pandemic.

And what better way to celebrate this season and our greater freedom than by taking a trip to Sutro Baths? Now beloved as beautiful ruins, this was once a place where San Franciscans came to explore cabinets of curiosities in Sutro's Museum, see grand carnivals, hear music, and cool off or warm up in a swimming tank. To do the latter, many had to rent wool bathing suits that must have been itchy and incredibly heavy when wet, but worth it to swim in an aquatic palace. We recently acquired two of these suits at the Cliff House auction and our pal **John Martini** traces their evolution in his article ***Sutro Baths Swimsuits: An Incomplete History***.

We no longer go to Land's End to watch woolen-clad swimmers frolic, and the once-bustling edge of the western world feels dark after losing its last legacy restaurant. As a historian, it's my job to watch and document how things unravel. This can be unsettling, but I also find comfort in seeing, time and again, how people weave a rope that connects them to the past and pulls them into the present. Weavers like photographer **Chrissy Huhn**, who grapples with the passage of time in her work in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, featured in this issue as a different version of remembrance in place of an oral history.

Chrissy's photographs of the landscape are deep in their stillness, whereas concert photographs taken by **Greg Gaar** are wild with frozen movement. The work of both photographers is so different on the surface but they both show how memory is an active relationship that we have with the past, in the present. It's easy to recognize the places they capture and see ourselves in them, making memory a form of time travel. You're on the cliff with Chrissy like so many photographers before her, you're in the club with Greg as if it were just yesterday. Through his lens we're transported, sweaty and swaying with the rhythm of rock 'n' roll or thrashing about with a band of happy punks. Even if you weren't there (like myself, a child of 1984), it's easy to recall the now iconic songs that were played at these shows. We recently launched a curated selection of Greg's music photography on OpenSFHistory and, in this issue, he takes us backstage to highlight some of his favorites in ***Playlist: Local Music According to Greg Gaar***.

Music triggers positive memories (that's science), and this summer issue made me think of Nick Mulvey's song "Begin Again," which I've had on repeat lately. It's about timelessness, renewal, and how those who came before are in everything around us. This resonates with me because it means I'm part of an unending chain. Mulvey repeatedly asks "Can we begin again?" and that refrain triggered a memory of my mother who, while looking through old photos the night before she passed away, said to me, "I wish I could do it all again." That's why I love history and photography: they refresh living lines of memory to keep close as I reawaken for the summer.



WHERE IN WEST S.F.?

By Paul Judge

Last issue's clue turned out to be the "Painted Rock," located at Lands End by the Coastal Trail that follows the old roadbed of the Ferries & Cliff House Railroad. Many people probably walk past it without much thought. While on a trail walk once with a group of school kids, their "origin idea" made perfect schoolyard sense: "That was one heck of a big bird that 'dookied' on that rock."

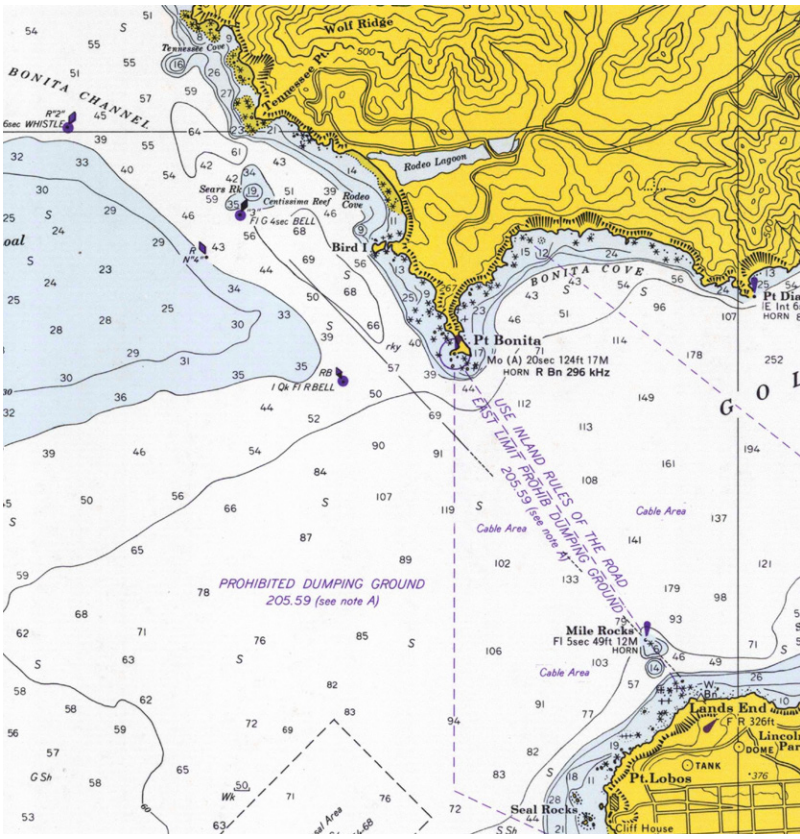


The Painted Rock. (Courtesy of Paul Judge)

The truth is less colorful but more interesting. At the entrance to the Golden Gate lies the San Francisco Bar, a horseshoe-shaped shoal jutting out from the Marin Headlands before curving back towards Ocean Beach. Anyone who has seen the angry combers that erupt and break over "the bar" realizes the threat it poses. It is imperative that mariners carefully navigate through the few gaps in that perilous obstacle. Many a vessel and crew have been lost in that attempt.

Lore has it that local fishermen and coastwise navigators painted the rock to help navigate the northern approach to the Golden Gate: the Bonita Channel, a narrow passage along the Marin coast running from Tennessee Point to Point Bonita. Generations of mariners relied on the Painted Rock by lining up it with Mile Rocks Lighthouse (1906-1966) to serve as a range and bearing guide. Lending credence to this arrangement was the eventual construction of a white shed housing a red navigation lamp near the edge of Lincoln Park Golf Course's third hole. The beacon was situated at an elevation of 326 feet, directly above the Painted Rock. This improvement made nighttime navigation possible. Thus, the range and bearing aid became a triad for mariners to line up Mile Rocks Lighthouse, the Painted Rock, and the red lamp beacon to navigate the Bonita Channel.

A couple of Outer Richmond chums shared anecdotal accounts. **Terry Weinberg** learned the use of the Painted Rock in the 1960s when he fished aboard Bill May's Monterey clipper, *Dixie Bell*. **Ed Tavasieff** relied upon the Painted Rock



Portion of Chart 5532, showing the entrance to the Golden Gate, 1972. (Courtesy of NOAA's Historical Map & Chart Collection)



The Painted Rock with the white shed housing the red lamp beacon above, 1972. (Image 7216060 / Copyright © 2002-2021 Kenneth & Gabrielle Adelman, California Coastal Records Project, www.californiacoastline.org)



Charlie figured out where to find the Painted Rock! (Courtesy of Margaret Ostermann)

when he was breaking into commercial fishing over 50 years ago. Architect **Zach Stewart** of the South End Rowing Club depended on the Painted Rock in the 1960s when and he and friends took his 18' Whitehall out the Gate on overnight rowing excursions to Bolinas and Drakes Bay. "The timing with the wind, the tides and currents was everything. Y'know, ya could rely on an eddy current through the Bonita Channel that allowed us to sneak back inside the Gate even on an ebb tide." Word and skills passed from skipper to skipper who plied the entrance to San Francisco Bay. Each warned that no one should mess with the angry, massive swells and breakers that arise on the San Francisco Bar.

Colin Dewey, a professor at the California Maritime Academy, used to skipper pilot boats. He recalls, "Some of the old-timers…these guys had all the ranges and visual bearings memorized, and sound signals were as important as visual ones in the fog. They worked tugs with whistle signals, before the advent of handheld radios and believed that the 'horsepower' in the wheelhouse or on the bridge wing was more important than what was in the engine room."

Improvements in electronic and satellite-aided navigation rendered many traditional navigation aids obsolete. At Lands End, the Monterey cypress and pine trees planted by public works programs during the 1930s have matured and now hide the Painted Rock from view by mariners. Yet, **Margaret Ostermann** and awesome canine junior historian Charlie easily uncovered the whereabouts of the Painted Rock on their walk along the Coastal Trail. They even reminded me that a plaque referencing the Painted Rock, written by John Martini, is posted at the Eastern Coastal Trail Overlook. For anyone with a nose for history, we'd love to learn more about the Painted Rock. There must be reference made to it in periodicals, perhaps correspondence tucked away in a chest, or in a family photo album? If you uncover anything, please share it with us.

In the meantime, here's your next "Where in West S.F." and what was the structure on the left?

Send your guesses to nicole@outsidelands.org





Chrissy Huhn, 2021. (Photo by Micaela Go)

CHRISSY HUHN

REMEMBERS

We cold-messaged photographer Chrissy Huhn on Instagram and it might have been one of the best decisions we made in 2020. Not only does she work in our backyard, she also sees the world through the same lens. Which is another way of saying that her art and our history are symbiotic. As two sides of the same coin, art and history are both are an accounting of time. We're showing Chrissy's work here alongside images from our OpenSFHistory archive that are striking in their similarities, even as they show how the landscape continues to evolve. We're so grateful Chrissy is now part of the WNP family and that her photographs are now part of the historic narrative of San Francisco. Below, Chrissy describes her work.

Can we see time? Our histories are told through landscapes as they change. I am drawn to the inherently ephemeral nature of shorelines because they are visual representations of time: the recession of the rugged coastline, erosion-formed textures, and rising sea levels. For the past seven years, I have documented the shoreline within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA). My process is slow and methodical, surveying the area and capturing the landscape on black and white medium format film. This time spent in the landscape is important to my artistic process. I photograph at sunrise the majority of the time. The light is warm, soft, and diffused. The combination of the film, paper, developer, and even the enlarger I use in the darkroom can produce a high contrast gelatin silver print. Therefore, I try to avoid high contrast shooting situations like high noon and full sun.

As one of the most visited sites in the National Park system, human interaction, just like time, shapes the GGNRA's cultural landscape. Growing up in northeastern Pennsylvania, I was drawn to the rapidly changing landscape surrounding the Delaware River, located within the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. Another heavily visited tourist area, I could physically see time passing in the fragile landscape. Now living in San Francisco, I find that same relationship to the diverse coastal environment within the GGNRA.







Left-to-Right Clockwise:
Couple atop Flag Rock, summer 2020. (Courtesy of Chrissy Huhn)

Seal Rocks, circa 1973. (Courtesy of David Gallagher / wnp12.00642)

Fisherman at sunrise, Lands End, late 2020. (Courtesy of Chrissy Huhn)





"OUR HISTORIES ARE TOLD





Left-to-Right Clockwise:
Sutro Baths ruins, 2015. (Courtesy of Chrissy Huhn)
Sutro Baths ruins, April 2014. (Courtesy of Chrissy Huhn)
Sutro Baths construction, circa 1890. (Photo by A.J. McDonald; courtesy of a Private Collector / wnp4/wnp4.0237)

Ocean Beach at sunrise, 2019. (Courtesy of Chrissy Huhn)
Trees, Lands End, 2016. (Courtesy of Chrissy Huhn)
View north from Lands End, circa 1910. (Photo by Willard E. Worden; courtesy of a Private Collector / wnp15.367)





THROUGH LANDSCAPES





AS THEY CHANGE."



Above and Lower Right:
Sutro Baths swimsuits. (Cliff House Collection; Western Neighborhoods Project)

SUTRO BATHS SWIMSUITS:

AN INCOMPLETE HISTORY

BY JOHN MARTINI

I've been fascinated by Sutro Baths since I was a kid, when my mother would take me to look at the creepily fascinating exhibits and watch skaters endlessly circling an ice rink built over a drained swimming pool. The building itself was a wonderment to me, full of painted over windows and rows of endless locked doors. "What are they hiding from me?" I would think. I later parlayed this interest into helping write a Historic Structure Report on the long-vanished Baths, which I turned into my book *Sutro's Glass Palace: The Story of Sutro Baths*.

I regularly give PowerPoint talks about the Baths (recently via Zoom) and there always seems to be someone "of a certain age" in the audience who actually swam there before the pools closed in late 1953. These old-timers share a common memory of the "itchy wool swimsuits we had to wear." Indeed, I've examined dozens of surviving tank suits stenciled with SUTRO BATHS, now in museums and private collections around the state. They do look most uncomfortable.

The more I researched Sutro's, though, it seemed the senior citizens' collective memory of being forced to wear old-fashioned suits didn't match reality. The photo archives of the San Francisco Public Library, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and OpenSFHistory are replete with images of swimmers wearing modern-looking bathing suits at Sutro's from the 1930s onwards.

So, what was the history of bathing suits at Sutro Baths? And was it mandatory to wear the old suits up through closing? It's not an easy topic to research. I first went to archival records from the Baths but they only list how many suits and towels were in inventory, not anything about the requirements for wearing them. I then did extensive newspaper searches, hoping to come up with some articles stating the regulations for bathing attire, but the closest I found was the admission prices: 10 cents to enter the Baths structure and another 15 cents to rent a towel, bathing suit, and tiny changing room if you wanted to swim. As it turns out, the best sources on the Sutro swimsuits and the pol-







Left-to-Right: Sutro Baths swimmers, 1904. (Johnston album; courtesy of Gary Stark). Sutro Baths men's swimsuit, circa 1952. Sutro Baths swimmers, circa 1920s. (Courtesy of San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library)

icies for wearing them are photographs showing swimmers over the decades, and surviving examples of the suits and their manufacturers' tags documenting the evolving styles.

The Baths opened for swimming in March 1896, but photographs indicate that the large SUTRO BATHS stencil didn't appear on bathing costumes until around 1899. The earliest closeup photo I found of a swimmer wearing a stenciled bathing suit comes from a 1904 photo album owned by collector Gary Stark. The two men in the photo are wearing similar tank suits with striped skirts over built-in shorts, but cut slightly differently around the shoulders. The fellow on the right has a faded SUTRO BATHS stencil on the front of his suit, above a mysterious diamond-shaped insignia, while his buddy's suit appears not to be stenciled.





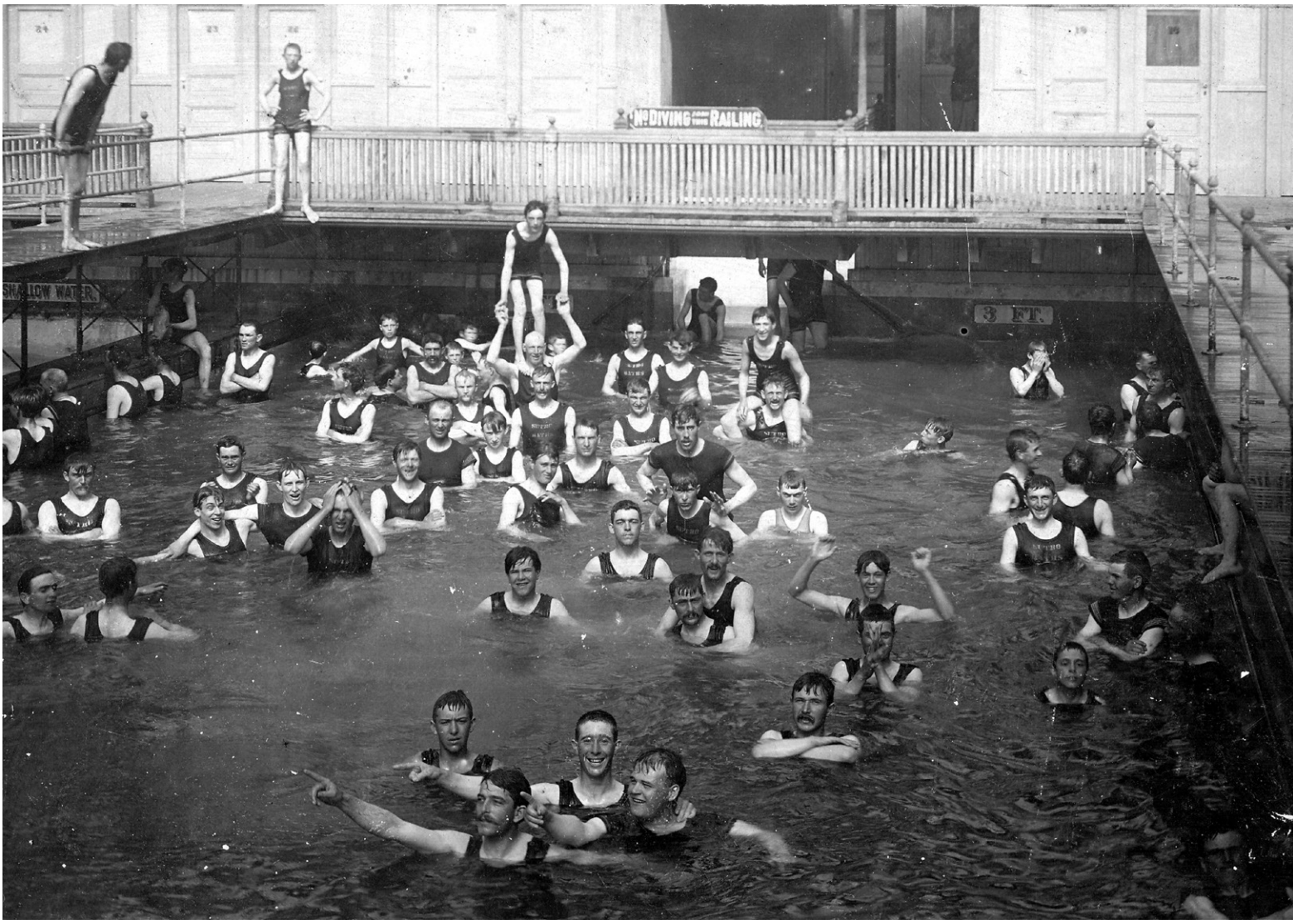
Sutro Baths swimmers, October 7, 1906. (San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library; courtesy of a Private Collector / wnp4/wnp4.0295)

A wonderful photo from the San Francisco Public Library shows three couples posing at the Baths in 1906. The men are wearing identical tank suits that simply read SUTRO on the front, one with a serial number. The size and location of the stenciling differs from suit to suit. The women, by contrast, all wear slightly different bathing costumes, with varying skirts, buttons, trim stripes, and collar styles. None of their suits have stenciling. Interestingly, all three women are wearing tied kerchiefs over their hair, the forerunners of bathing caps.

Throughout the 1910s and 1920s, the basic swimsuit for men stayed pretty much the same as first seen in the 1904 photo: a long woolen tank top with narrow shoulder straps, built-in shorts, and skirt extending to the top of the thighs. Some suits had longer leg lengths than others, but this may have resulted from stretching after laundering – or simply ill-fitted garments. The only design features of men's suits that seems to have changed over the years was the skirt length, which gradually got shorter, and the number of stripes along the skirt edge. During this period the stenciled legend became standardized as "SUTRO" over "BATHS," printed in a slight serif font.

The design of women's suits seems to have evolved later than the men's, but by the 1920s theirs too had standardized into an overall dark wool suit with a long skirt edged in stripes worn over long shorts, with visible shoulders, and SUTRO BATHS stenciled on the front. In distant views of the pools, the similar cuts and dark color of the baggy swimming costumes make it difficult to differentiate between men and women swimmers. The trick is to look for the presence of shoulders and short sleeves on the women.

I call these ubiquitous dark wool swimsuits with their striped edging and prominent stencils "Baths-issue" bathing suits. These were the suits issued to patrons at the checkout counter along with a towel and admission to the changing rooms.



Male swimmers at Sutro Baths, circa 1910. (Courtesy of Marilyn Blaisdell)

We still can't determine whether bathers could wear their own swimsuits into the pools, or if they were required to wear the Baths-issue suits. Personally, I suspect the latter was policy for several decades. The simplest explanation may have been sanitation. By requiring patrons to wear Baths-issue clothing, management could make sure the pools stayed clean and that every visitor received a sanitized suit. One newspaper article in the early 1900s described how the bathing costumes were boiled in seawater after each use and then dried in a cabinet heated to 212 degrees before being reissued. (The article also mentioned that no detergent was used for fear it would wear out the woolen suits.)

The mandatory wearing of Baths-issue suits may also have been a response to Victorian prudery. I found two newspaper articles about Sutro Baths that support this theory. On June 24, 1895, the *San Francisco Call* ran a story about a swimming competition at the Baths that commented on the men's bathing costumes: "Dolphin Club wore the thinnest of thin swimming suits that were cut very close top and bottom and when damp clung tighter than the costumes worn by the bronze statues. The Dolphins for the sake of decency should in future exhibitions appear in bathing dress that is not quite so clinging." For special events like swimming competitions, swimmers were apparently allowed to wear their own suits. On November 12, 1902, a travel reporter for the *Atchison Daily Globe* visited the Baths and noted, "A sign is prominently displayed which says: 'Single piece bathing suits not allowed,' and it is a good regulation, for a single piece bathing suit is about as bad as nothing at all." (A single piece bathing suit might have been similar to a modern leotard.)

A policy mandating that all swimmers wear identical, baggy, near-shapeless bathing costumes could have addressed these blue-nosed concerns. And the policy seems to have been enforced. Photos taken before the 1930s show pools jammed with male bathers, all wearing nearly identical Baths-issue bathing suits.



Sutro Baths in color, circa 1952. (Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives, Douglas W. Price Photograph Collection, c.1940-1960, GOGA 36997)

None of the surviving Sutro Baths suits I've seen have manufacturing dates on their labels prior to 1921. I can only guess that few early suits survived the poundings they must have taken during innumerable wearings and launderings, and repeated boiling in hot water.

In the early 1930s, Sutro Baths received a makeover when then-manager Adolph G. Sutro (grandson of the more famous Adolph) decided to upgrade the aging facilities. He added a new art deco entrance, converted part of the main pool into an indoor tropic beach, built sunbathing decks, and eventually added an ice rink. In addition, he seems to have done away with the requirement to wear Baths-issue suits. In fact, several publicity photos from the Baths' reopening in 1934 feature bathing beauties posed outside in one-piece bathing suits, as if to say, "this isn't your father's Sutro's anymore.'"

Photos taken between the 1934 re-opening and the end of swimming in 1953 document swimmers almost exclusively wearing contemporary swimsuits, likely their own. When we examine photos of large groups of swimmers, only occasionally (and under magnification) can a lonely swimmer be spotted wearing a droopy SUTRO BATHS suit. A color photo taken shortly before the pools closed reveals not a single person wearing a Baths-issue suit.

My evolving theory is this: after 1934, when the requirement to wear Baths-issue suits was dropped, patrons began wearing whatever style swimsuit they wanted (within reason, of course). However, the old-style suits were still available to rent for folks who either didn't own their own suits, or preferred the older styles, or perhaps just didn't want the hassle of taking a dripping wet swimsuit home on the streetcar. That's why the Baths-issue suits occasionally show up in photos.



It also appears that patrons could buy suits at the Baths. An article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* from December 13, 1950, describes how an employee became suspicious of two youths who returned to the Baths several days in a row and "bought new swim suits for each day's dip." Turns out they were buying the suits with proceeds from a string of petty burglaries in the neighborhood.

Perhaps to stay current, Baths-issue suits with manufacture dates after 1930 became more contemporary in design, especially the women's suits. Made primarily by Gantner of California, these suits gradually replaced the older bathing costumes handed out at the checkout counter. A good example of this trend to stay contemporary is a one-piece girl's bathing suit with a halter top, reflecting an attempt to keep the Baths-issue suits trendy. It has an "NRA" (National Recovery Administration) tag, dating it to the mid-1930s. Another detail noted by us "rivet-counters" is that sometime in the 1930s the font on the stencils changed from serif to sans serif. Men's issue bathing suits manufactured after 1930 retained the general design of the 1920s styles, but without the skirt. Curiously, a few examples of men's brief-style swimsuits have turned up, with SUTRO'S stenciled across the rear. These suits probably date from 1952 or '53, after the Whitney family purchased the Baths and changed the name to simply "Sutro's".

The question must be asked: if it wasn't mandatory to wear them, why do so many of the Baths-issue suits survive today? I believe it's because as the requirement to wear them went away, those remaining in stock lasted for years due to lack of use. (The Baths must have maintained a huge inventory of swimsuits; there were enough still around in 1966 when Sutro's closed that local kids could buy them for four dollars.)

And how about those old-timers who swam in the Baths and swear they had to wear the wool suits? Wasn't wearing them optional? I suspect they probably *did* wear the old-style suits. They would have to have been very small children to have swam there (swimming ended 68 years ago) so it's possible their parents hadn't yet bought them their own suits and rented them instead. ("Kids grow so fast nowadays.") Or maybe it's a false memory based on looking at so many historic Baths photos.

There's one final mystery about the Sutro Baths suits that still perplexes researchers: the mysterious letters stenciled on the lower left of nearly every surviving swimsuit. The letters run from A through F, surrounded by a circle or a triangle or sometimes nothing at all. These symbols don't seem to correspond to men's versus women's styles, or the sizes of the suits, or any other logical variable. Even former Baths employee Tom Bratton, who was an oracle on all things Sutro, couldn't decipher the code. The search continues!



Sutro Baths women's swimsuit, circa 1935. (Golden Gate NRA, Museum Program, GOGA-03977)



Sutro Baths men's swimsuit, 1927. (Courtesy of Glen Koch)

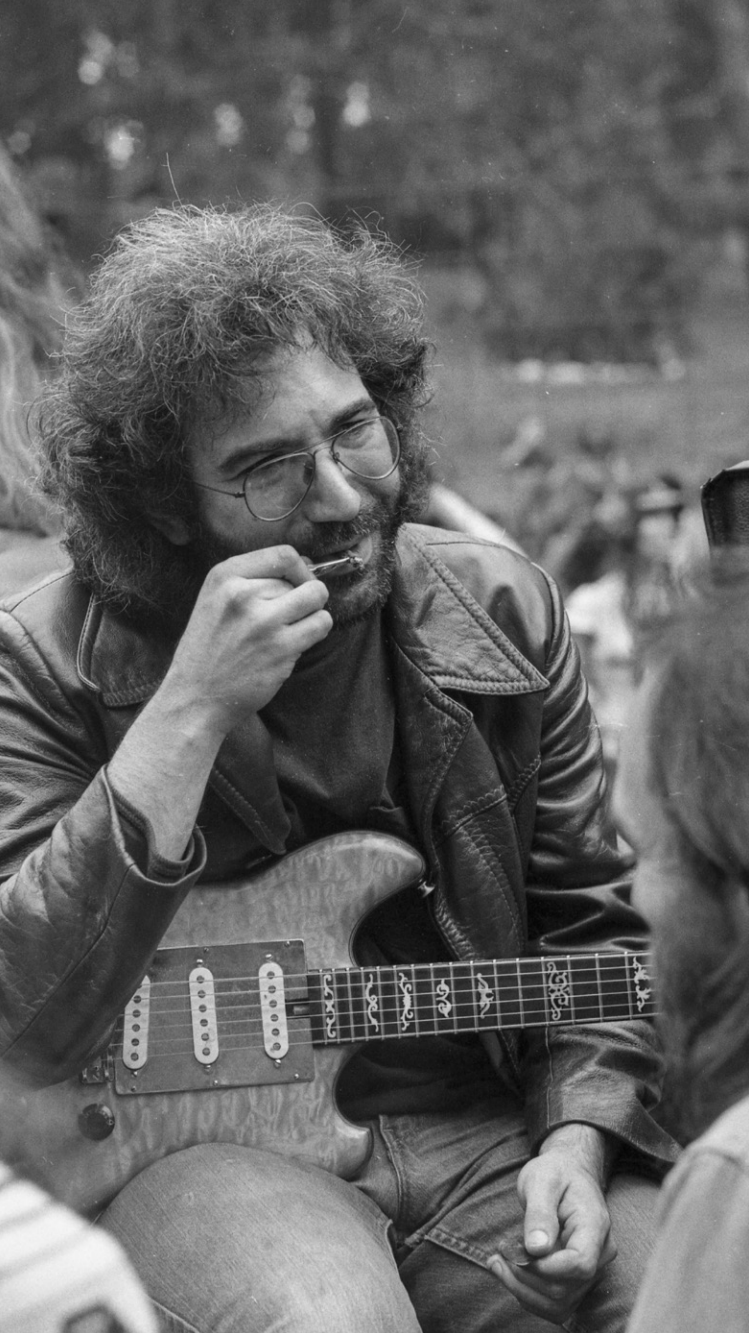
PLAYLIST: LOCAL MUSIC

ACCORDING TO GREG GAAR



San Francisco is lucky to claim Greg Gaar as a native son. A fierce protector of the city's natural environment and prolific photojournalist, WNP is equally as lucky to digitize and make his Bay Area concert photos available to the public through OpenSFHistory. The collection contains 1,000 photographs taken from 1972 to 1989 that were chosen by Greg, who is actively involved in cataloging – an absolute dream for present-day archivists and future historians. In his own words, here are Greg's favorite concert photos. You can see these and many more on www.opensfhistory.org/Music (with a capital "M").

OpenSFHistory is displaying a thousand of my music photos. Here's a sampling of some of my favorites. I became a photojournalist while studying photography at City College. Taking pictures at concerts was challenging but always fun since I was a fan. I'm fortunate to have been blown away by both the psychedelic San Francisco Sound and the local Punk Rock scene.



Jerry Garcia toking up at Marx Meadow, Golden Gate Park, September 2, 1974. (Courtesy of Greg Gaar / wnp73.0249)



Phil Lesh, Donna Godchaux, Bob Weir, and Jerry Garcia at Winterland, March 19, 1977. (Courtesy of Greg Gaar / wnp73.1775)

THE GRATEFUL DEAD

The free 1974 Labor Day concert at Marx Meadow was billed as Jerry Garcia and Friends. I was allowed to go backstage to meet Jerry and other celebrities. I said hello to Wavy Gravy, Merl Saunders and Bill Kreutzmann. On that foggy afternoon, people gathered around Jerry while he strummed his guitar called "Wolf". Joints were passed and fans gave Jerry small gifts. He was easy to talk to and a good listener with a sense of humor. Jerry and I both grew up in the City so he mentioned going to Balboa and I said I went to Lowell. He laughed. Just a simple conversation with a nice guy who is now a music and cultural legend. Garcia is my favorite lead guitarist because his rifts as well as his vocals affected my inner emotions in many ways from sadness to joy. Jerry's music could take you far out into the cosmos and then bring you gently back to the present similar to a good psychedelic experience.

I first saw the Grateful Dead in the Panhandle in January 1967. During the time that I was in the Navy from June 1967 until February 1971, I played tapes of the Dead, Jefferson Airplane, Big Brother and the Holding Company, and Quicksilver Messenger on the USS *Mansfield*. I'm sure that I "turned on" lots of my shipmates to the San Francisco Sound.

JERRY'S MUSIC COULD TAKE YOU FAR OUT INTO THE COSMOS AND THEN BRING YOU GENTLY BACK TO THE PRESENT SIMILAR TO A GOOD PSYCHEDELIC EXPERIENCE.



Roger Daltrey, Pete Townshend, and Keith Moon, October 10, 1976.
(Courtesy of Greg Gaar / wnp73.1348)

THE WHO

The Who and the Grateful Dead jammed at the Oakland Coliseum on October 9th and 10th, 1976. Musically and photographically, the best concert that I ever attended. Jerry's guitar was cooking and as you can see, I got a great shot of Pete Townsend leaping for the sky. *Dick's Picks Volume 33* is a four CD recording of the Dead during that weekend.

THE R

Since I knew mo
made the show s
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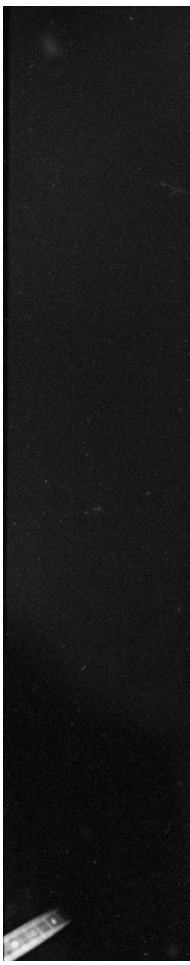
lenses was diffic



JAMES BROWN

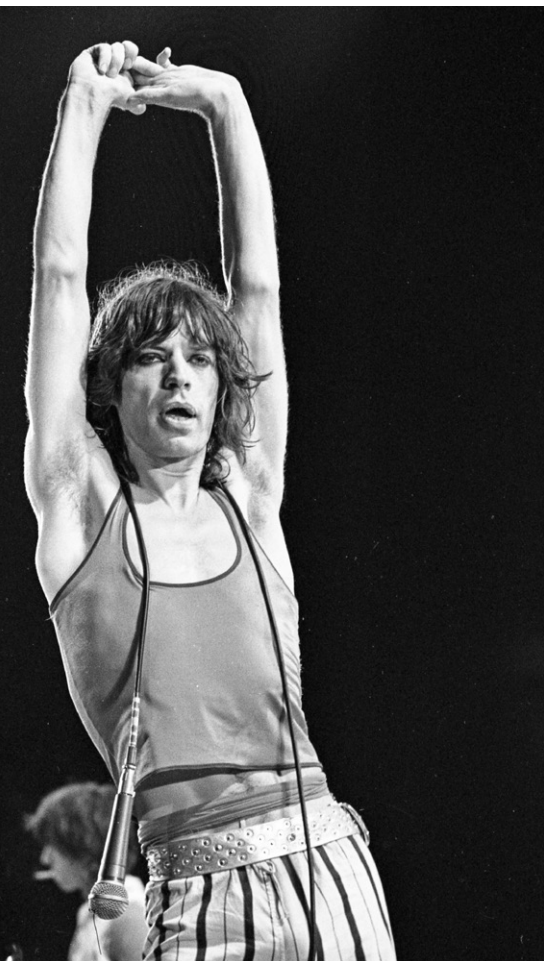
The "Godfather of Soul" never had a dull moment on stage and this performance was no exception. I feel privileged to have experienced a James Brown show.



James Brown at Keystone Berkeley, January 30, 1982.
(Courtesy of Greg Gaar / wnp73.3658)

ROLLING STONES

st of the Rolling Stones' songs, it
super exciting. This concert was the
graphed in a chaotic crowd. I had
and enjoy the great music. Shifting
ult when fans were banging into you.



Mick Jagger at the Cow Palace, July 16, 1975. (Courtesy of Greg Gaar / wnp73.0111)

THIS CONCERT WAS THE FIRST TIME I PHOTOGRAPHED IN A CHAOTIC CROWD. I HAD TO KEEP MY COOL AND ENJOY THE GREAT MUSIC.



Neil Diamond, Joni Mitchell, Neil Young, Rick Danko, Van Morrison, Bob Dylan, and Robbie Robertson at Winterland, November 25, 1976. (Courtesy of Greg Gaar / wnp73.1657)

THE LAST WALTZ

The Last Waltz at Winterland had numerous guest performers to celebrate The Band's final tour. The show was easy to photograph since the stage lighting was designed for Martin Scorsese's film crew.



Bob Dylan and Neil Young at Kezar Stadium, March 23, 1975. (Courtesy of Greg Gaar / wnp73.0454)

SNACK CONCERT

The SNACK (San Francisco Students Need Athletics, Culture and Kicks) concert at Kezar Stadium on March 23, 1975 was a benefit to save art classes and athletics in the city's public schools. The performers and celebrities that appeared can be seen on OpenSFHistory. Everyone wanted to see and hear Bob Dylan performing with Neil Young.



Jello Biafra crowd surfing at Mabuhay Gardens ("The Fab Mab"), December 14, 1981. (Courtesy of Greg Gaar / wnp73.3563)

SEX PISTOLS

The Sex Pistols' invasion of America in 1977-78 created a fan base for Punk Rock. It wasn't the sweet delight of the Beatles invasion in 1964, but an exhilarating anger towards the entire system. The Nuns and the Avengers, both San Francisco punk bands, were also on the bill at Winterland. This was the final Sex Pistols' concert. The band broke up and within a year, bass guitarist Sid Vicious was dead.

DEAD KENNEDYS

The Dead Kennedys were the most well known San Francisco punk band. Jello Biafra is a fantastic showman and entertainer and he encourages fans to join the performance. Jello's lyrics are politically and socially thought provoking. A DK's show is total entertainment.

SOUND OF MUSIC

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VKTMS

I was a big fan of the VKTMS. Unfortunately, the band never got the recognition that it deserved. Lead singer and songwriter Nyna Crawford was as electrifying as Janis Joplin or Patti Smith. Her lyrics in "MUNIcide," "Teen-age Alcoholic," and "Midget" were beautifully offensive. Sadly, Nyna died of cancer in 2000.



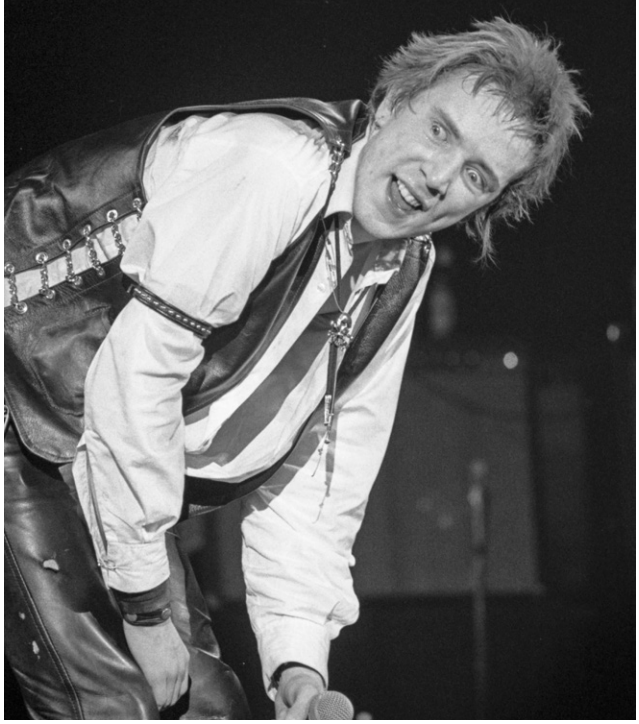
Steve Ricablanca and Nyna Crawford at The New Old Waldorf, March 27, 1981. (Courtesy of Greg Gaar / wnp73.3213)



D.O.A. at Sound of Music, March 1981. (Courtesy of Greg Gaar / wnp73

D.O.A.

Known as the "S&M Club," Sound of Music was a small, intimate venue at 162 Turk Street in the Tenderloin that allowed punk patrons to get up close and personal with the bands. Joey "Shithead" Keithley, lead singer of Canadian hard-core punk band D.O.A., is now a progressive politician.



Johnny Rotten at Winterland, January 14, 1978. (Courtesy of Greg Gaar / wnp73.2175)

PATTI SMITH

Patti Smith is high energy on stage. I saw her twice in November 1976. At a January 1978 book signing, I showed Patti some of the photos that I took, which she then autographed.



Patti Smith at Boarding House, November 16, 1976. (Courtesy of Greg Gaar / wnp73.1535)

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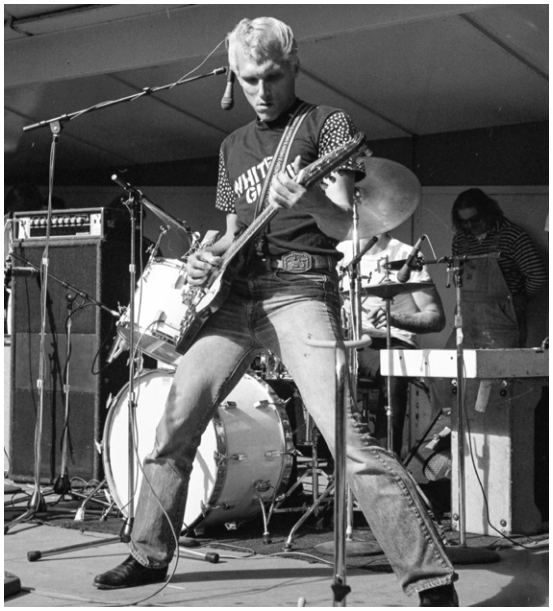

Jorma Kaukonen with White Gland at Marx Meadow, Golden Gate Park, July 28, 1979.
(Courtesy of Greg Gaar / wnp73.2716)

THE TUBES

Fee Waybill, of the Tubes, changed into numerous costumes during each performance. Here he is dressed as Quay Lewd, performing “White Punks on Dope”. When Fee sang “Space Baby,” he dressed as an astronaut. Fee became Tom Jones when singing “It’s Not Unusual,” with half-naked girls clinging to him.

Fee Waybill at Winterland, December 31, 1975. (Courtesy of Greg Gaar / wnp73.1117)



JORMA KAUKONEN

Next to Jerry Garcia, Jorma is my favorite guitarist. He was the psychedelic sound of Jefferson Airplane and the blues lead guitar of Hot Tuna. Jorma bleached his hair for this show. He’s still going strong at age 80.



Miss Marie Urerra-Pon's kindergarten class, West Portal Elementary School, 1953. (Courtesy of Claire Douglas)



Inside the Outside Lands

There's much to catch you up on, dear members, but before we launch into that, we need to address the rabbit in the room: Mr. Pink Ears.

In last issue's article "Walt Stevenson Remembers," Walt fondly recalled that the West Portal Elementary School Traffic Squad had a mascot named Mr. Pink Ears. Well, **Grant Ute** wrote in to tell us that "when not on a traffic duty at formal parades, he lived in Miss Marie Urerra-Pon's kindergarten classroom at the south end of the lower floor of the former Claremont Boulevard wing of the school." Miss Pon retired in June of 1974, he believes, and it's assumed that Mr. Pink Ears retired with her. How does Grant know this? His mother was a teacher at West Portal Elementary, where he was also a student and member of the Traffic Squad. **Claire Douglas** confirmed this story and sent us a photo of Miss Pon's 1953 kindergarten class. Claire is in the top row, third from the left, and there's Pink Ears in the front row between the third and fourth students. Thank you so much for sharing, Grant and Claire! We live for history like this.

Lately, our days are all about the Cliff House. We're excited to announce that **Gary Stark** has chosen WNP as the permanent steward of his prolific website, cliffhouseproject.com. Although he'll still be very much involved, Gary is handing over the domain to us and donating rare historic photographs from his personal collection. We're truly honored to take this incredible resource into its next chapter. And if you haven't already heard, we debuted the first exhibition of our Cliff House auction acquisitions last month at our Home for History (1617 Balboa Street) in the Richmond District. This marks the official reopening of our office, so please come by and see these pieces during open hours: Thursdays through Saturdays, 11:00am to 4:00pm. It's not easy for a one-employee outfit to staff open hours and we can use all the help we can get. Contact Executive Director Nicole Meldahl (nicole@outsidelands.org / 415-661-1000) if you're interested in volunteering for a shift to keep the doors open.

Which isn't to discount the small army already helping us do the history work that we do. Volunteers are what keep the lights on here at WNP and we're so grateful for them. We'll have a full list of everyone in our final issue of the year but let's give a round of applause to our exhibitions team: **Rick Bellamy, Jenny Love, John Martini, Harvey Newman,** and **Morgan Schlesinger**. And we'd be remiss not to introduce our first paid intern, **Isabel Scanlon**, who began working with us at the end of June. With an interest in historic preservation and architecture, Isabel is helping us research west side historic landmarks – those that are already formally designated and those that aren't recognized…yet.



Third Cliff House, circa 1970s. (Marilyn Blaisdell Collection; courtesy of Molly Blaisdell / wnp70.0096)

THE LAST WORD

We recently went "out to the Cliff" to check on one of our newest babies, the Whitney Totem Pole, and the sidewalks were teeming with people. This area has been and will always be timeless, reliant on no one person or business. As John Martini points out during history walks at the site, people came to this part of the city before it was even a city. As you read this, we're finalizing our special use permit with the National Park Service for a pop-up museum in the former Cliff House Gift Shop. After years of documenting the history of this place, it's incredible to become part of that history and carry on the legacy of the keepers who came here before us: the Yelamu, Adolph Sutro, George K. Whitney and family, and, of course, Marilyn Blaisdell. For years, Marilyn ran a shop called San Francisciana out at the Cliff. Donations from her daughter, Molly Blaisdell (which you can see on OpenSFHistory), fit so well with the Cliff House pieces we acquired at auction that it almost feels like a homecoming instead of the end of an era.



Marilyn Blaisdell in her shop, San Francisciana, circa 1970s. (Marilyn Blaisdell Collection; courtesy of Molly Blaisdell / wnp70.0081)

Not a WNP Member?

Outside Lands magazine is just one of the benefits of giving to Western Neighborhoods Project. Members receive special publications as well as exclusive invitations to history walks, talks, and other events. If you like what you've read, please join hundreds of other west side fans as a member. Visit our website at **outsidelands.org,** and click on the "Become a Member" link at the top of any page.

